

**I. Introduction.**

**II. You have turned from the message of Christ crucified. 3:1**

- A. Is Paul being too hard on the Galatians by calling them foolish?**
1. Sometimes sharp reproof is needed. 2 Tim. 4:2 3:17-17 1 Th. 5:14
  2. Paul is not calling them an obscene name, but is calling out their lack of spiritual perception. Mt. 5:22 Luke 24:25
  3. The Galatians, like Peter, are on the verge of denying the gospel. 2:11-14,21
- B. Why does Paul say that they are bewitched? Acts 8:9-11**
1. This appears to be the most reasonable explanation for such irrational behavior!
  2. Those who are distorting the gospel are like evil sorcerers who hold you under their spell.
  3. Those who corrupt the gospel do the devil's work. Eph. 6:12 2 Co. 11:3,13-15
  4. We also know of some who have come under the spell of false teachers.  
1 Co. 10:12 Eph. 4:14
- C. How could you do this after the crucified Christ was clearly displayed to you? 2:21**
1. The answer is for the Galatians to fix their eyes back on Christ crucified.
  2. Our message is the cross. 1:4 2:16,20 3:13 1 Co. 1:18 2:1-5 1 Pet. 3:18 2:24
  3. Good preaching vividly portrays the crucified Christ. Eph. 2:17 1 Co. 2:2
  4. Many get sidetracked from our central gospel message of Christ crucified.
  5. God has chosen to disseminate His good news through preaching. 1 Co. 1:21-25  
Ro. 10:14-17
  6. Many in our day are attracted to more popular (less "foolish") methodologies.
  7. Christ crucified is also portrayed to us in the ordinances – baptism and the Lord's supper. Rom. 6:1ff 1 Co. 11:23-26
  8. It is incredible that anyone who has seen Christ crucified in the gospel could get caught up in legalism and seek to add to what Christ has accomplished. 2:21

**III. You have forgotten how you obtained the blessings of the Holy Spirit. v. 2-4**

- A. You initially received the Holy Spirit by faith, not works. v. 2**
1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
    - a. The Holy Spirit is God. Acts 5:3-4 1 Co. 3:16 2:10-11 Mark 3:29 John 15:26  
II Co. 3:17-18 13:14
    - b. The Holy Spirit is a Person, not just a force. John 16:7-11 Mt. 12:31-32  
Acts 15:28 Rom. 8:26 1 Co. 2:11 Eph. 4:30 Ps. 139:7 Heb. 3:7
  2. What does the Holy Spirit do?
    - a. He gives us the new birth in conjunction with the Word – regeneration.  
Js. 1:18 John 3:6-8 1 Th. 1:5-6 1 Co. 2:12,14
    - b. He seals our salvation. Eph. 1:13-14 2 Co. 1:22 5:5
    - c. He testifies to our hearts that we are sons of God. 4:6 Rom. 8:16
    - d. He indwells believers. 2:19-20 1 Co. 3:16 Rom. 8:11
    - e. He reminds us of truth, convicts us of sin, leads us and helps us to pray.  
5:16,18 Luke 12:12 John 15:26 16:7-11,13 Rom. 8:14,26
    - f. He gives special abilities by which we serve God and one another. 1 Co. 12:4ff
    - g. He produces fruit in our lives. 5:22-23
  3. The reception of the Holy Spirit is a special blessing of the New Covenant. 3:14  
Ezek. 26:26-27 37:14 Joel 2:38-32 John 7:39 20:22 Acts 1:8 2:16-21,33,38

4. Paul (again) sets up a dichotomy – you either received the Spirit by works of the Law or by the hearing of faith.
  5. The gift of the Holy Spirit is received by faith (alone) apart from works. Ro. 10:17 Acts 10:44,47 11:15 8:15-17 19:6 15:11-12
  6. Because you received the gift of the Holy Spirit by faith, it is folly to think that anything else (Law) is needed in order for you to be justified. 2:20 Ro. 3:20 10:3
  7. Some groups today claim that only the best receive (earn) the Holy Spirit.
- B. You continue to be perfected by the Spirit, not the flesh. v. 3**
1. Since your life with God began with the Holy Spirit, why would you think that your growth towards maturity would take place through the flesh?
  2. The dichotomy between the Spirit and the flesh is the same as the dichotomy between Law-works and faith. v. 2 4:23,31 6:8
  3. This is exactly the problem many believers today are having – after starting with the Spirit and faith they try to progress by mere human effort (the flesh and Law).
  4. The Christian life continues and reaches its completion just as it started – by the Spirit’s work. Phil. 1:6 Heb. 12:2
  5. You never outgrow the gospel -- grace, faith, and the work of the Holy Spirit are as necessary in sanctification as they were in justification.
  6. Paul does not say that we make no effort towards obedience. 5:13ff Phil. 2:12-13
- C. To return to the Law would make your previous experience (suffering) vain. v. 4**  
4:29 5:11,10 6:12 Phil. 1:29 Acts 14:2,5,19,22
- D. Summary -- God’s gift of the Holy Spirit among you is through faith, not Law. v. 5**
1. God has generously provided His Spirit Who works miracles among you. Acts 14:3,8 12:10,28-29
  2. Another dichotomy – does the Spirit work powerfully among you because of your Law works or by faith?
  3. The false teachers would deprive you of the Spirit and His operation among you.
  4. Should we expect the same kind of powerful signs in our day? 1 Co. 12:10,28-29 2 Co. 13:4 Heb. 2:4 Rom. 15:19 2 Th. 2:9
  5. How does the Holy Spirit work powerfully among us? 5:22f Js. 1:18 Eph. 1:13f

#### **IV. Concluding applications: Have you received the Holy Spirit? Acts 2:36-42**

##### **Discussion questions**

1. Did Paul go too far by calling the Galatians foolish?  
Is it ever appropriate for us to issue such strong rebukes?
2. In what way was Jesus publicly portrayed as crucified in Galatia?
3. How do religious paintings, statues, dramas, films and dance distort the gospel?
4. What is the best way for us to carry the gospel to the lost?
5. How do many today get distracted from the central message of the gospel?
6. What do you think of the efforts of people today who want to convey the gospel by methods other than preaching?
7. How does the experience of the Galatians with the Holy Spirit prove that justification is by faith and not by the works of the Law?
8. How do people today sometimes subtly move from grace and the Spirit to relying upon the Law and the flesh?
9. How does the Holy Spirit manifest His power among us?